

July 25, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PSC: BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT CONTINUES TO INCREASE**

LINCOLN – Deployment of broadband services for Nebraskans continues to increase, according to a staff report released by the Nebraska Public Service Commission.

The Commission received the report at its weekly meeting today, which showed nearly 100 percent of the state's population living in incorporated places has broadband access at a speed of 200 kilobits per second both upstream and downstream, the definition used by the Federal Communications Commission for "advanced services" or broadband.

The study categorized four types of broadband services: cable modem, digital subscriber line (DSL), satellite, and wireless. Of the four services, DSL is the most prevalent, reaching 97.2 percent of the population of incorporated places. Cable modem service was second at 85.2 percent, wireless third at 45.9 percent, and satellite was fourth at 9.8 percent.

The study found 14 communities are served by five or more service providers: Alliance, Bridgeport, Broken Bow, Chadron, Gothenburg, Grand Island, Hastings, Lexington, McCook, Minden, North Platte, Ogallala, Scottsbluff, and Sidney. Commission staff relied on responses to a Commission inquiry among broadband providers to compile the report. Not all providers responded.

The report indicated that more data is needed to determine the deployment of broadband services to Nebraska's 384,382 residents living in rural areas outside incorporated places. The study, however, did show that 18 providers, all of which were local telephone companies, offered broadband services to all telephone subscribers in their exchanges, which include areas outside incorporated places.

Carriers were asked to specify the speeds at which each service is delivered, the type of transmission facility, the price, the number of potential households in each area that can be

served, and the number of subscribers in each area. Data contained in the report was filed by providers from January through March of this year.

The Commission had last studied the state's advanced services infrastructure in 2002, issuing a report of the study in January 2003. That study indicated 82 percent of Nebraska's telephone exchanges had broadband infrastructure in place. In the 2003 report, 41 percent of 597 communities counted had DSL availability and 31 percent had cable availability.

The Commission undertook the current study in January this year. The study was conducted independently of other public or private efforts to examine broadband deployment. The Commission said it would continue to study broadband deployment in the future and directed staff to submit a report annually.

###